DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 216 493 EC 142 447

AUTHOR Beardsley, Donna A.
TITLE Children's Social Attitudes Inventory: A Specialized Instrument for the Study of Attitudes Toward the Handicapped.
PUB DATE Mar 82
NOTE 27p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Disabilities; *Interaction; *Peer Acceptance; Primary Education; *Student Attitudes; *Test Construction; Test Reliability; Test Validity
IDENTIFIERS *Childrens Social Attitudes Inventory; Likert Scales

ABSTRACT

The study developed a 12 item Likert type scaled answer sheet, associated questions regarding social situations where the handicapped and nonhandicapped might interact, and a posterboard picture for determining the attitudes of primary grade students toward other handicapped children. Interviews, observations, a review of the literature, consultation with and examination by experts in the field, an initial item pool, a prepilot and pilot study, item analysis, and item correlation with total score were used to determine instrument validity and reliability. Coefficient alpha for the instrument was over .75. Validity was established through observation, pilot testing, and examination by experts in the field. Inventory questions, the posterboard picture, and statistical data are appended. (Author/SB)

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Children's Social Attitudes Inventory: A Specialized Instrument for the Study of Attitudes Toward the Handicapped

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March 1982

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ABSTRACT

Many studies reflect the use of specialized instruments for measuring attitudes toward minorities and the handicapped. However, little could be found to measure the attitudes of primary age students toward their handicapped peers. This study developed a twelve item Likert-type scaled answer sheet, associated questions regarding social situations where the handicapped and nonhandicapped might interact, and a posterboard picture for determining the attitudes of primary grade students toward other handicapped children. Interviews, observations, a review of the literature, consultation with and examination by experts in the field, an initial item pool, a pre-pilot and pilot study, item analysis, and item correlation with total score were used to determine instrument validity and reliability. Coefficient alpha for the instrument was over .75. Validity was established through observation, pilot testing, and examination by experts in the field.

Children's Social Attitudes Inventory: A Specialized Instrument for the Study of Attitudes Toward the Handicapped

Many research studies reflect the importance of using specialized instrumentation for studying verbalized attitudes. Iano and Jones (1974) used a sociometric technique to measure class acceptance or rejection of peers. Children were presented a series of questions and asked to respond by naming other children in the classroom. For example, questions asked included, (1.) Who are the children in your class that you like best? or (2.) Who wouldn't you like to have sit next to you? Ballard (1977) also used a sociometric device when he required pupils to indicate whether they liked, disliked, felt neutral toward, or did not know each of the other students in the class by circling a face with either a smile, frown, neutral expression or a question mark.

Billings (1963) used pictures as a stimulus to response. One picture depicted a normal girl; the other picture showed a crippled girl. First, third and sixth grade students were asked to write stories about each picture at different times. The stories were compared for differences in attitude toward the handicapped. Rather than using just pictures, Litcher and Johnson (1969) used attitude objects and pictures. For one instrument, two dolls were used, one having a different skin color. Students were asked to point to a doll in response to a series of questions. The same procedure followed in a second instrument except that the objects were shown on one large picture posterboard. A third instrument required the children to make direct comparisons between Negroes and whites on eighteen traits, two of them being on the traits of laziness and cheerfulness.

Schwartz (1973) used a dichotomous scale to measure attitudes toward Negroes on thirteen statements. Yuker (1970) noted that Siller used a similar technique except that he expanded his scale to seven degrees of disagree and agree in order to measure how a person would feel in the presence of a handicapped person. Lastly, Beatty (1969, p. 119) noted that the Collier County Board of Public Instruction developed a "How I Feel" Attitude Inventory Test consisting of twelve statements. Students would place an X over one of six funny faces to describe how they would feel in response to teacher read questions. For example, the teacher might ask, "I feel this way when it is time for my reading lesson." The same format was used in the Heathington (1976) Primary Attitude Scale except that five faces were used and the stem question read, "How do you feel when. . . ."

All of the instruments described above were valid and reliable in each of the respective studies. They all had the singular objective of measuring a predetermined verbalized attitude. Consequently, many of the formats were similar in that either pictures or objects were used in conjunction with requests to answer certain specified questions. Responses were most often recorded on a scale. However, little could be found by way of an instrument with the intent to measure the attitudes of nonhandicapped primary age school children toward their handicapped peers (Beardsley, in press). Consequently, an instrument to measure these attitudes was constructed from a synthesis of ideas gleaned from a review of the literature and from an expert in children's literature (Lilja).

Instrumentation

The instrument (see Appendix A) was a Likert-type scale. Also called a summative scale, it measured self-reported attitudes toward the handicapped.

> At the present time, most measures of attitudes are based on self-report, and from what evidence there is concerning the validity of different approaches to the measurement of attitudes, it is an easy conclusion that self-report offers the most valid approach currently available. (Nunnally, 1967, p. 516-517)

The summative scale's advantages over other methods include, (1.) an appealing model, (2.) easy format for construction, (3.) high reliability, (4.) adaptability in measuring different kinds of attitudes, and (5.) a history of producing meaningful results in a host of studies. Though the self-report scale is limited to what the individual is willing to relate, this point is less crucial in a self-report measure than it is in a self-description inventory. To the extent that anonymity of responses is assured, self-report measures should not be strongly influenced by peer pressure (Nunnally, 1967, p. 517, 531).

As already noted, the reliability of summative scales is quite high. Even with as few as ten statements, reliability has been found to be .80 or higher. Its advantages over the Thurstone scale in this respect have been documented (Nunnally, 1967, p. 531; Edwards, 1957, p. 161). The high reliability is a consequence of the experimenter being able to intuit items that will correlate with one another and the subject being able to see the common core of meaning between items (Nunnally, 1967, p. 524).

One criticism of the summated rating scale is that it cannot distinguish precisely the attitude of a single individual in the middle

range of the attitude continuum. The criticism, however, is not always relevant. That is, if

> . . .in terms of research, our interest is in comparing the mean change in attitude scores as a result of introducing some experimental variable, such as a motion picture film, then the lack of knowledge of a zero point should cause no concern. Similarly, if our interest is in comparing the mean attitude scores of two or more groups, this can be done with summated-rating scales as well as with equal-appearing interval scales. (Edwards, 1957, p. 157)

Furthermore, verbalized attitudes have been criticized for not correlating highly with behaviors pertaining to the attitude. However, this does not mean that verbalized attitudes are invalid. In fact, they can be ". . .highly valid measures of reported attitudes" (Nunnally, 1967, p. 517). In many instances, what is said is more predictive of social action than what might be felt more deeply. For example, if the children in a classroom verbalize an acceptance of handicapped children, then a catalyst to behavioral expressions of acceptance is created even though some children may still harbor a fear of actual contact. Having initiated social action, it is only a matter of time before behavioral acceptance catches up with verbalized acceptance.

> So, then, one has a right to be directly interested in verbalized attitudes, without claiming that they have a high degree of correspondence with other attitude-related forms of behavior. (Nunnally, 1967, p. 518)

To ensure content validity, the plan and procdure for instrument construction are of great importance.

> The validity of the measure is judged by the character of the plan and by the apparent skill with which the plan has been carried out. (Nunnally, 1967, p. 80-81)

Accordingly, the construction of the instrument in this study

began with the compilation of an item pool. Professors, four elementary school teachers, one housewife, and five second and third grade children were interviewed for ideas pertaining to what might constitute a realistic social situation for interaction between normal and handicapped children. In addition, ideas were accumulated from personal observations of third grade classrooms and from a review of the literature.

As was noted above, five second and third grade students were interviewed. The children came from the University of Missouri Laboratory School in Columbia, Missouri. These children were excused from class for a twenty minute interview. A circle was formed by the children and interviewer at the end of one of the halls outside of their classroom. Each child was given an answer sheet. Five questions were selected at random from the original item pool for the interview. A sketch was shown the children which depicted the figures of three crippled children and two normal children. As the interviewer asked the questions, the children were instructed to place an X over the scaled value which described how they would feel in the particular social situation of interest. One example question was completed before using the items from the item pool. Four questions pertained to interactions between the normal child and a handicapped peer. For these questions, the handicapped characters in the picture were indicated. Following the five questions, an informal discussion took place among the interviewees and researcher. The responses to the questions were analyzed. It was found that the items needed to be noncompetitive, nonacademic social situations. In instances where the situation was competitive or academic, the children expressed not so much a dislike

of the handicapped as they expressed a dislike for mathematics or the possibility that a handicapped child might keep them from winning a prize. The interview resulted in, (1.) the addition of new social situations, (2.) the revision of some of the items from the original item pool, and (3.) a cursory check for content validity.

Though a minimum of thirty items for the item pool was needed, thirty-eight were compiled (Adams). (see Appendix B) The questions represented social situations involving the interaction of a single person with two or three other peers. The latter were either handicapped or nonhandicapped. In seventeen questions the individual would be interacting with a nonhandicapped group. In seventeen matching social situations, the individual would be interacting with a handicapped group. An individual would be interacting with both handicapped and nonhandicapped children in four situations. These latter questions served as blinders to the purpose of the study. Each social situation was preceded by the stem, "How would you feel if. . . ." All thirty-eight of the items were examined by two experts and evaluated for suitability, match of social situation, wording, and representativeness of content (Jilja, Reckase). The items were placed in a random order and approved for pilot testing.

> If it is agreed by. . .persons in positions of responsibility, that the plan was sound and well carried out, the test has a high degree of content validity. (Nunnally, 1967, p. 80-81)

The picture (see Appendix A) developed to accompany the test questions had on it three handicapped children and two nonhandicapped children. One handicapped child was in a wheelchair. Another child wore a hearing aid device. A third child was an amputee on crutches.

The inclusion of these types of handicapping conditions would facilitate the measurement of attitudes toward the handicapped in general. That general attitudes toward the handicapped exist and that instruments have been devised to measure generalized attitudes are documented in over three hundred studies using the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale (Yuker, 1970). All of the children in the picture had short hair and wore slacks. They were also participating in similar activities and all had a pleasant expression on their face. Accordingly, the depicted children were drawn as realistically as possible in order to promote the identification of real children with the children on the posterboard. The final product was a black and white ink drawing. The prototype picture was examined and evaluated by two experts for appropriateness (Lilja, Reckase).

The answer sheet (see Appendix A) for the instrument had scaled items and/or words numbered for each question. There were five categories to each number ranging from "Very Unhappy" to "Very Happy." Intermediate categories included the words "Unhappy" and "Happy" on either side of "I Don't Know." Demographic questions at the top of the answer sheet asked for the child's name, teacher's name and school.

The thirty-eight statement item pool, posterboard and answer sheet served as the instrument in a pilot study to determine the twelve items for the final instrument (Lilja, Reckase, Adams; Nunnally, 1967, p. 531). The procedure for pilot testing was taken from Jum C. Nunnally's Psychometric Theory (1967) and approved by two experts in research design and analysis (Reckase, Adams). The sample for the reliability pilot study on the instrument included five classrooms and/or one hundred sixteen third grade public school children from a mid-western city.

The reliability study classrooms were heterogeneously grouped and mainstreamed. The itinerantly served and self-contained handicapped were among the children in the classrooms. Handicaps included speech and hearing impairments, mental deficiencies, learning disabilities and behavioral disorders. Furthermore, at the time of the initial testing, there had been no formal programs to improve attitudes toward the handicapped in either the classrooms or the schools.

The testing procedure in the reliability study followed the same format for each of the classrooms tested. First, the students were given a Likert-type scale answer sheet having on it the words "Very Unhappy," "Unhappy," "I Don't Know," "Happy," and "Very Happy" for each of thirty-eight questions. The researcher showed the students one large picture having on it the figures of three handicapped and two nonhandicapped children. The subjects were told that the children in the picture were their own age. The subjects were also told that, (1.) the first person was in a wheelchair, (2.) the second person was jumping up and down, (3.) the third person was hard of hearing so he or she needed to wear a hearing aid, (4.) the fourth person was without a leg and so he or she needed to use crutches, and (5.) the fifth person was merely walking around and perhaps pointing out something to someone. The subjects were then told that the researcher would ask them some questions about the children in the picture and that they were to put an X over the word(s) which described how they would feel doing different things with the different children in the picture. The researcher guided the children through one example question in order to clarify the directions. After the example was given, actual testing began. Preceding each of the questions on the Likert-type scale, the subjects

were reminded to put an X over the word(s) which described how they would feel in the particular situation described. As each question was read, different groups of figures on the picture were indicated by the researcher. Handicapped children on the posterboard were the objects of seventeen questions and nonhandicapped children in the picture were the objects of seventeen questions. All of the children in the picture were indicated on four questions.

After the children were tested on the preliminary instrument, the tests of the handicapped students were eliminated from the total number of students taking the test. An item analysis followed on the remaining one hundred sixteen tests. First, the thirty-eight items were divided into the seventeen questions pertaining to social situations involving the handicapped and the seventeen matched questions pertaining to social situations involving the nonhandicapped and coefficient alpha found on each set of seventeen items. (see Appendix C) The tables in Appendix C show the number and percentage of responses over 116 children on each item from the pilot instrument for each category of response on the instrument and the correlation of each item with the total score. Five items from each of seventeen handicapped questions and seventeen nonhandicapped questions were selected in the following manner for inclusion on the final instrument. First, each item in the table of handicapped items was checked for a correlation with the total score of at least .60 on the original seventeen handicapped items (Reckase). In addition, these items were checked for having a wide range of responses made in the different response categories found on the instrument. Each of the items fitting the criteria were then checked for a social match among the seventeen nonhandicapped questions.

The social match needed a .60 correlation with the total score on the original seventeen nonhandicapped items and a wide range of responses made in the different response categories found on the instrument. Accordingly, the items selected for the final instrument had the highest correlations possible among the handicapped and nonhandicapped questions. Having established the level of correlation for each item, the coefficient alpha was then determined for each set of five handicapped questions and five nonhandicapped questions. A coefficient alpha of at least .70 was needed for the reliability of the instrument (Nunnally, 1967, p. 226; Adams). The coefficient alpha for the handicapped items was .77. For the nonhandicapped items, it was .79. Hence, the five handicapped questions, the five nonhandicapped questions and two blinder questions served as the final instrument. (see Appendix A)

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APPENDIX A

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL ATTITUDES INVENTORY

NH: Nonhandicap question
H: Handicap question
B: Blinder question

How would you feel if:

NH 1. Any of these people came to school with you?

B 2. Any of these people invited you to play in their back yard at home?

H 3. You were asked to choose any of these people as a partner during free play?

NH 4. You had to stand next to any of these people in line for recess?

NH 5. Someone asked you to make sure that these people got on the right school bus?

H 6. You had to sit next to any of these people at school?

B 7. Any of these people forgot their lunch money?

H 8. Any of these people wanted to swing on the swing set with you?

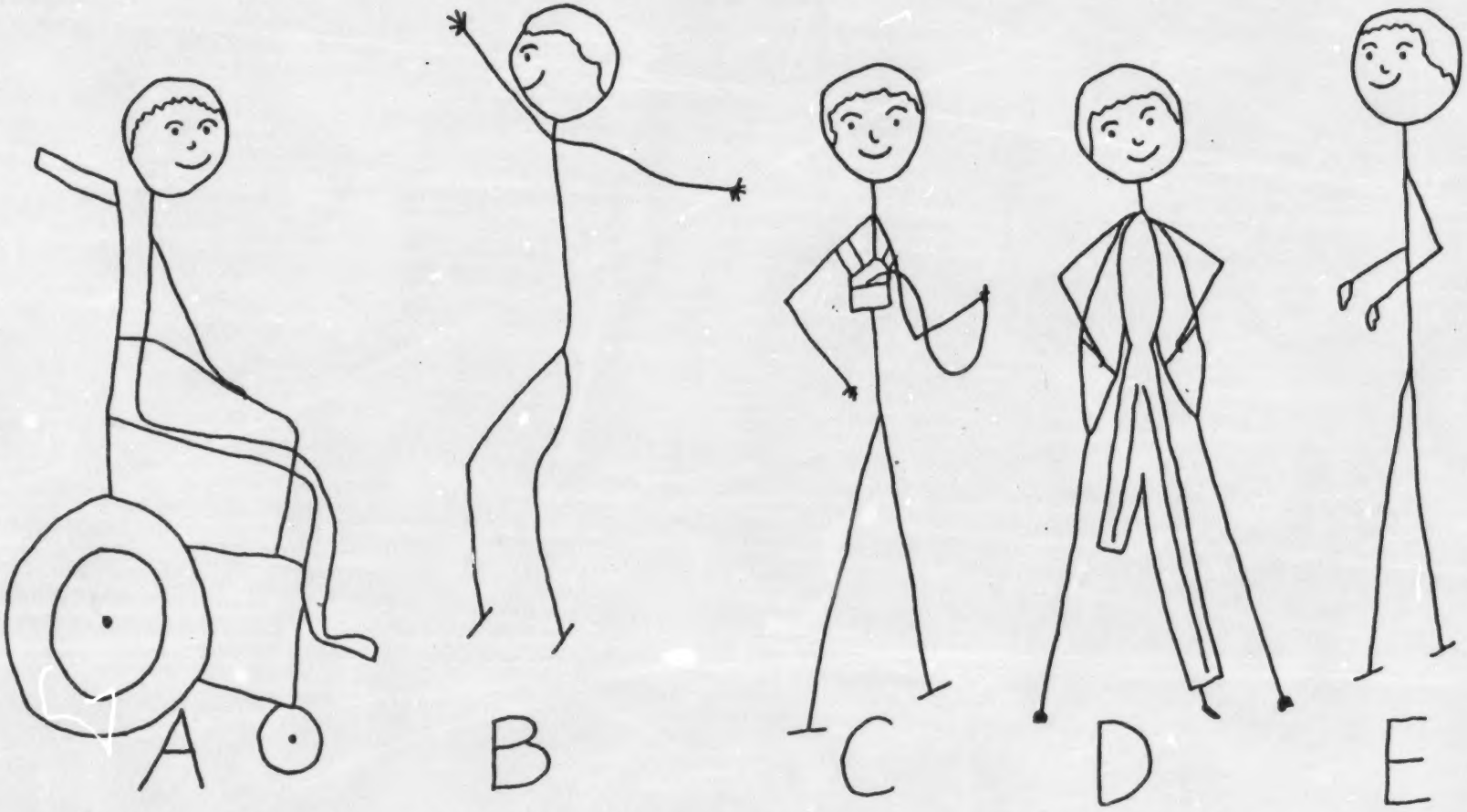
NH 9. You were asked to choose any of these people as a partner on a field trip?

H 10. Any of these people rode to school with you on the bus?

H 11. Someone asked you to help any of these people sit at their desk?

NH 12. Any of these people came outside to the playground and wanted to teeter-totter with you?

POSTERBOARD PICTURE[1]



[1]The stick figures in the above picture had the characteristics of realistic children in the actual picture used with the instrument.

ANSWER SHEET

YOUR NAME_____ SCHOOL_____

TEACHER'S NAME_____

EX-AM-PLE	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
1.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
2.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
3.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
4.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
5.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY

6.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
7.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
8.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
9.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
10.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
11.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
12.	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	I DON'T KNOW	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY

APPENDIX B

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL ATTITUDES INVENTORY
RELIABILITY STUDY TEST QUESTIONS

NH: Nonhandicap question
H: Handicap question
B: Blinder question

How would you feel if:

NH 1. These people were in the same reading group as you are?

NH 2. Someone asked you to work with these people in planning a game to play at recess?

NH 3. You had to show any of these people how to make paper airplanes?

H 4. These people were in the same classroom as you are?

NH 5. Any of these people lived across the street from you?

H 6. Someone asked you to show any of these people around the school?

B 7. Any of these people wanted you to help them clean up the classroom before leaving school?

H 8. You were asked to choose any of these people as a partner during free play?

NH 9. Someone said that these people were coming to your Christmas party at school?

H 10. Someone asked you to work with these people in planning something for the class to do during free time?

NH 11. Any of these people wanted to help you and your friends plant flowers for decorating the room?

H 12. Someone said that these people were coming to your birthday party?

NH 13. Any of these people wanted to give you something that they had made at school?

H 14. You had to show any of these people how to make clay animals?

B 15. Any of these people gave you a piece of candy?

H 16. Any of these people moved into the house next door to you?

H 17. Someone asked you to help any of these people sit at their desk?

NH 18. Someone asked you to help any of these people open their crayon box?

H 19. Any of these people wanted to be your friend?

B 20. Any of these people forgot their lunch money?

H 21. Someone asked you to help any of these people open their milk carton?

NH 22. Any of these people came to school with you?

H 23. Someone told any of these people to share their eraser with you?

NH 24. These people were friends of yours?

H 25. Any of these people wanted to swing on the swing set with you?

H 26. Any of these people wanted to give you a present?

NH 27. You were asked to choose any of these people as a partner on a field trip?

NH 28. Any of these people came outside to the playground and wanted to teeter-totter with you?

H 29. Someone said that these people were fun to play with?

NH 30. Someone told any of these people to share their scissors with you?

H 31. Any of these people rode to school with you on the bus?

NH 32. You had to stand next to any of these people in line for recess?

H 33. Someone said that you were going to work with these people in a group to make pictures for the classroom?

B 34. Any of these people invited you to play in their back yard at home?

NH 35. Someone asked you to make sure that these people got on the right school bus?

H 36. You had to sit next to any of these people at school?

NH 37. Someone said that these people were fun to be with?

NH 38. Someone asked you to show any of these people where the lunch room was at?

APPENDIX C

TABLE 1

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS ON HANDICAPPED ITEMS

Item	Response Categories: Very Unhappy N	Very Unhappy %	Unhappy N	Unhappy %	I Don't Know N	I Don't Know %	Happy N	Happy %	Very Happy N	Very Happy %	Correlation on 17 Items	Correlation on 5 Items*
4	6	5.2	12	10.3	32	27.6	31	26.7	35	30.2	.61	
6	4	3.4	4	3.4	8	6.9	34	29.3	66	56.9	.70	
8*	8	6.9	12	10.3	38	32.8	37	31.9	21	18.1	.68	.74
10	0	0.0	10	8.6	25	21.6	47	40.5	34	29.3	.54	
12	5	4.3	3	2.6	17	14.7	39	33.6	52	44.8	.68	
14	2	1.7	4	3.4	14	12.1	43	37.1	53	45.7	.73	
16	2	1.7	6	5.2	27	23.3	45	38.8	36	31.0	.74	
17*	5	4.3	6	5.2	25	21.6	43	37.1	37	31.9	.68	.70
19	2	1.7	2	1.7	11	9.5	17	14.7	84	72.4	.60	
21	1	.9	1	.9	19	16.4	47	40.5	48	41.4	.65	
23	2	1.7	1	.9	27	23.3	44	37.9	42	36.2	.36	
25*	5	4.3	5	4.3	27	23.3	43	37.1	36	31.0	.63	.76
26	1	.9	1	.9	4	3.4	12	10.3	98	84.5	.23	
29	2	1.7	5	4.3	16	13.8	27	23.3	66	56.9	.61	
31*	0	0.0	6	5.2	21	18.1	47	40.5	42	36.2	.70	.70
33	2	1.7	3	2.6	22	19.0	27	23.3	62	53.4	.73	
36*	3	2.6	3	2.6	27	23.3	37	31.9	46	39.7	.61	.71

Mean Score on 17 items = 69.55 STD = 10.22 N = 116
Mean Score on 5 items = 19.31 STD = 3.66 N = 116

Coefficient Alpha on 17 items = .90
Coefficient Alpha on 5 items = .77

*Selected items for inclusion on the final instrument.

TABLE 2

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS ON NONHANDICAPPED ITEMS

Item	Response Categories: Very Unhappy N	Very Unhappy %	Unhappy N	Unhappy %	I Don't Know N	I Don't Know %	Happy N	Happy %	Very Happy N	Very Happy %	Correlation on 17 Items	Correlation on 5 Items*
1	1	.9	0	0.0	34	29.3	56	48.3	25	21.6	.42	
2	2	1.7	8	6.9	30	25.9	46	39.7	30	25.9	.36	
3	4	3.4	4	3.4	33	28.4	40	34.5	35	30.2	.39	
5	1	.9	3	2.6	25	21.6	54	46.6	33	28.4	.52	
9	5	4.3	3	2.6	20	17.2	34	29.3	54	46.6	.58	
11	3	2.6	5	4.3	20	17.2	56	48.3	32	27.6	.63	
13	3	2.6	2	1.7	10	8.6	27	23.3	74	63.8	.48	
18	6	5.2	9	7.8	20	17.2	60	51.7	21	18.1	.55	
22*	1	.9	6	5.2	14	12.1	52	44.8	43	37.1	.66	.75
24	2	1.7	1	.9	11	9.5	38	32.8	64	55.2	.66	
27*	7	6.0	6	5.2	35	30.2	32	27.6	36	31.0	.62	.74
28*	2	1.7	2	1.7	21	18.1	57	49.1	34	29.3	.71	.76
30	3	2.6	1	.9	21	18.1	61	52.6	30	25.9	.53	
32*	1	.9	7	6.0	38	32.8	48	41.4	22	19.0	.73	.77
35*	2	1.7	3	2.6	26	22.4	49	42.2	36	31.0	.62	.69
37	1	.9	3	2.6	20	17.2	43	37.1	49	42.2	.61	
38	3	2.6	2	1.7	17	14.7	49	42.2	45	38.8	.68	

Mean Score on 17 items = 67.97 STD = 8.98 N = 116
Mean Score on 5 items = 19.56 STD = 3.44 N = 116

Coefficient Alpha on 17 items = .87
Coefficient Alpha on 5 items = .79

*Selected items for inclusion on the final instrument.